

A...
Paper March 1824
W. E. Homer
Dean

Dissertation
on the

Nature, History, and Treatment
of Dysentery;
by Daniel H. High.
of Pennsylvania.

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Lancaster

Distillation

on the

Water, Alcohol and Distillation

of Chemistry

by Daniel Wright

of Pennsylvania

An Inaugural Essay.

In complying with the laws and regulations of this University, which obliges the candidate to write a Dissertation on some Medical Subject: I beg leave to offer, though, with much diffidence, a few remarks on the Nature, History, and Treatment of Dysentery.

As this disease, owing to its mortality and universal prevalence, has claimed the attention of Medical men, from the earliest ages, it cannot be expected that one, who acknowledges himself a Tyro, in science and in letters, should advance any thing new,

profounds, or highly polished upon it;
a plain and simple statement of
what I have acquired during a
limited course of reading, and
the usual attendance on medical
lectures, is all that must be looked
for, as yet. but little has been ac=
quired either by observation or
experience.

History of Dysentery.

Dysentery is a disease of warm
rather than cold countries, and occurs
in the latter end of summer or au=
tumnal months, at the same time
with Intermittent, or Remittent
Bilious Fevers.

It is a disease claiming particu=
lar attention from military Physicians,

importance in highly polished upon it
a plan and simple to the point of
that I have acquired during a
limited course of reading and
the most assistance in business
practice. In all that must be taken
in account but little has been ac-
quired either by observation or
experience.

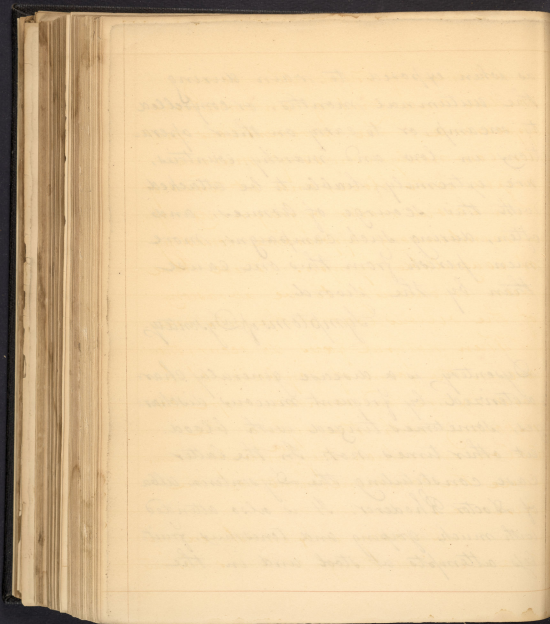
Study of Psychology

Psychology is a science of reason
which has been for centuries and seems
in the future to be of increasing im-
portance. It is the study of the laws and
the development of the mind.
It is a science of the mind.
It is a science of the mind.

as when exposed to rain during the autumnal months, or compelled to encamp, or to carry on their operations in low and marshy countries, are extremely liable to be attacked with this scourge of Armies, and often, during such campaigns, more men perish from this one cause than by the sword.

Symptoms of Dysentery;

Dysentery is a disease generally characterized by frequent mucous discharges, sometimes tinged with blood, at other times not. In the latter case constituting the Dysenteria alba of Doctor Rhoderer. It is also attended with much griping and tenesmus, fruitless attempts at stool and in the



indulgence of them little being voided and that of an unnatural appearance; The excrementitious matter commonly consists of mucous mixed with blood, and at times of thin serous matter or fragments of a membranous appearance, consisting of coagulable lymph. These have been erroneously, to be abrasions of the villous coat of the intestines.

When natural feces do occur, they are in the form of Scybala, of a hard texture and rounded shape, corresponding with the cells of the Colon in which they ^{have} probably lain, since the commencement of the disease;

Dysentery is often ushered in by a Diarrhoea, though at times, obstinate

constipation marks the approach of the disease several days previous to its commencement, attended with flatulence and considerable disorder of the Stomach; But in whatever way it makes its first appearance it now puts on its characteristic symptoms; at times in the commencement a pure and unmixed blood is voided in considerable quantities;

Streaks of blood with the faecal discharges, denote opening of small vessels at the extremity of the Rectum; The stools at the commencement have a faint smell, but should mortification ensue the foetor is intolerable;

Dysentery is generally complicated with fever, and these put

on different types being Intermittent, Remittent, and sometimes of a Typhus Character.

Termination.

The Terminations of this disease are various. it sometimes ceases gradually after proper treatment, the stools becoming natural, and the griping with the Tenesmus entirely disappearing. In other cases the disease often continuing for some time ends in a Diarrhoea, accompanied with Lenteric symptoms;

this complaint sometimes terminates in a severe attack of Rheumatism, be as it were thrown upon the extremities, and owing to this cause, some have gone so far as to consider it a Rheumatic affection of the

bowels; Our prognosis in this disease should be extremely guarded, as apparently desperate cases at times recover.

We may consider the patient in danger, when the first Puke and Purge does not relieve him.

The symptoms with the fever continuing to increase, ^{the pulse, sweating, and Intermittent} the Countenance much changed, the patient restless, without complaining of Grippings, also, cases attended with little or no discharge from the bowels; Here inflammation probably transcends the secretory point, these appear to be of the Nature of Colic. the pain being similar, and generally terminates fatally, In the low and advanced stages, Hiccough if obstinate denotes mortification;

Causes of Dysentery.

The causes of Dysentery are crude, indigestible, and acrid matters taken into the Stomach. The ordinary causes of autumnal or Intermittent fevers, sensible qualities of the atmosphere, as sudden transitions from Heat, to Cold, or from dryness to Humidity.

It alternates with Rheumatism, and appear to be of a Rheumatic nature. It may be considered as a disease originating from Marsh Effluvia, and peculiarities of the atmosphere. We must infer from this, its seat in the stomach finally extending itself to the Great Intestines.

The actual condition of

the above parts produced by the above causes, and upon which most of the symptoms depend, appears to be, an inflammatory state of the mucous coat lining the *Prima Via*, especially, the great intestines, together with this and probably in great measure caused by it, there is a preternatural constriction of the muscular fibres of the intestines. Those two circumstances are sufficient to explain many of the symptoms: The retention of the natural feces in the Colon will account for the non-appearance of natural excrements, and the inflamed state of the lining membrane for the effusion of serum.

We accordingly find upon

The above paper presented by the
author contains some very valuable
information of the importance of the
subject is so, an explanation of the
of the disease containing the
name of, especially, the great
importance of the subject and the
need of a great measure of
the fact that in a historical
relation of the disease is
of the subject. There are two
conditions are sufficient to explain
of the subject. The relation
of the disease to the body
is not the same for the two species
of natural experiments and the
above that of the body and
in the opinion of the author.
The accompanying paper is

dissection when there is not too much disorganization from Gangrene. constrictions of the Colon, and the consequence of violent inflammation may always be detected, such as thickening of the coats of the intestines, ulcerations of the Colon and Rectum, though the latter is by no means a necessary consequence of Dysentery;

A pustular appearance of the colon and Rectum is sometimes found, which extends their whole length.

The small intestines are seldom found in a diseased state, but are much inflamed.

Diagnosis.

Dysentery resembles Diarrhoea in some respects, but may be distin-

=guished from it by the Tenesmus
and the smallness of the evacuations,
though the latter symptom, often
attends Diarrhœa especially of ad-
vanced life, also by the discharge
of blood which does not occur in
Diarrhœa;

The fever in Dysentery also
serves as a distinguishing mark,
The two diseases sometimes run
into each other.

From Colic, it may
be distinguished by the constipation
and acuteness of the pain attending
the former, and also by the presence
of Tenesmus in the former:

Treatment of Dysentery
Dysentery may be considered as
a disease in which the efforts of

Measure towards effecting a cure are
for the most part abortive,

But if the view I have taken of
the disease be correct that is I
consider it an inflammatory affection
of the lower bowels especially of their
internal coats, accompanied with
stricture of the Colon which is to
be considered in a great measure
as an effect of the inflammation. The
indications of cure are sufficiently
obvious.

Our first object should be
to lessen or remove the inflammation
together with the morbid irritation
and spasms attending it; and for
^{effecting} this purpose nothing seems to answer
so well as venesection, and in strong
habits where inflammatory symptoms

run high; blood in considerable quantities should be drawn; the operation being repeated as often as the state of the system demands it. But during some seasons when the system seems disposed to fall into the Typhoid condition, Caution in the use of blood-letting becomes necessary; but generally in our Climate it is called for as a prelude to the rest of the Treatments; and in the words of a worthy and distinguished Professor excels all other means in awakening susceptibility to remedial impressions.

We next nauseate and attempt to vomit. when there is a collection of bile resort to Emetics and this is particularly necessary in the

Dysentery arising in Miasmatic Coun=
tries. The Tartarised Antimony, app=
=pears to be the best vomit, but
should a milder one be required
we may resort to the Ipecacuanha,
but the principal object to be ob=
=tained in a recent case of Dysentery,
is, an ample evacuation of the In=
=testinal Canal. The morbid secre=
=tion into the bowels together with
the morbid matters already there,
no doubt have a tendency, to in=
=crease all the symptoms.

The indication now to be full=
=filled are the removing these with
as little irritation to the inflamed
parts as possible, for this purpose
we resort to the milder cathartics,
and to succeed the Emetic, nothing

appears to be preferable to the Castor
oil: Glauber Salts or Epsom salts
given in solution with Emetic
Tartar. will be found extremely
serviceable. This generally causes
a copious evacuation, at times, how-
ever, the bowels will not be acted
upon by the above articles, here
we resort to an infusion of
Senna holding Glauber salts in
solution.

In cases arising in Mias-
matic districts and those of a
bilious character Mercurial purges
will be found most useful.
Large and repeated doses of Calo-
mel, combined with opium will
be found to answer extremely well.
We know of no valuable property

of Calomel when applied to inflamed surfaces, as it would be in this. It does not increase the inflammation or excite irritation. It may also be given in conjunction with Rheubarb, In conjunction with the above treatment Mucilaginous injections will be found necessary; they may be composed of Flaxseed tea. Gum Arabic or Starch. after Evacuations and before if the pain be distressing, opiates may be given. when exhibited during the evening we should reap most benefit from them, as sleep taken during night appears to be more refreshing than that taken during the day--

The opiate practice should never seriously interfere with

the operation of the Purgative; We generally continue the purging until the Stools become natural, and for this purpose we must alternate the different purgatives. Should the Stools still continue Dysenteric, and symptoms of approaching Gangrene appear, The Spt. of Turpentine with Castor oil appears to be the best remedy. The turpentine appears to increase the purgative operation of the Oil, and the salutary effects ~~of the results~~ from its use in Gastric and other affections of the alimentary canal about to terminate in Gangrene, may be expected from its use in Dysentery, especially when accompanied with much pain and Tensions of the abdomen: We should

also wring cloths out of it, and
apply them to the belly.

Like most other diseases partak-
ing of the nature of our autumnal
fevers, this disease is accompanied
with a stricture of the extreme vessels,
and a consequent suppression of
Perspiration. It, therefore, becomes
an object of primary importance to
this function to its natural and
healthy state, and for this purpose
the Antimonial preparations have
been highly spoken of: but much
more may be expected from a combina-
-tion of opium, Ipecacuanha and Cal-
-omel in small doses. This will be
found to answer better than Dover's
powders. For Calomel in small
doses is found to be very beneficial

in complaints of the bowels, and
Ipecacuanaha to be serviceable where
there is much Tenesmus. In Conjun-
-tion with this where there is much
tension of the abdomen we may
employ fomentations. The warm bath
will be found a remedy of much
importance.

Blisters are indispensable
in this stage of the disease, a large
one should be applied to the ab-
-domen so as to cover the lower
part of the belly, it will subdue
inflammation and lessen constriction
and morbid irritation of the part.
But in some cases of this obstinate
and fatal complaint, notwithstanding
the use of all the above remedies in
the early and acute stages, it continuing

eyes unbroken.

The mouth Tongue
and throat covered with aptha, the
pulse feeble and small, the strength
sunk, the body more or less ema-
ciated and in addition to this
perhaps great anxiety at the Thorax:
dia with extreme difficulty of breathing,
The stool frequent and small con-
sisting of sanies or purulent matter
mixed with blood, the Tormenta and
Tenesmus distressing. In this advanc-
ed stage of the disease the evac-
uation of the offending matter from
the bowels is our Chief object, and
for this purpose the mildest Medicines
must be employed: We must endeavor
to sheathe the bowels by blands
Mucilaginous and oily drinks to

allay pain and irritation.

For Fulfilling the first indication we may employ Castor oil with the Spt. Turpentine or any of the mild oils combined with the Tinct. of Rheubarb. Also the Gum Arabic or any of the mucilaginous diluents holding the Neutral Salts in solution, and given in conjunction are well adapted to this stage of this complaint.

Should the Tormentum and Tenesmus be distressing the Oilegginous mixture will be found highly serviceable. We may also employ the Cretaceous Julap. and in conjunction with the above mild injections of Flaxseed Tea or Mutton suet. but the best remedy of all for allaying the Tormentum

tormena and Tenesmus is an injection of melted butter. this should be free from salt and rancidity, and administered in the quantity of half a pint or three Gills. When there is much pain and Tenesmus, and especially when the Glysters cannot be long retained, it becomes necessary to combine laudanum with them or put an Opium pill or two up the rectum. The intestines will make effort to expell them, and some benefit will generally result from the alleviation of the tormena and Tenesmus.

In all the Bowel affections and particularly in Dysentery great attention should be paid to diet. It should con:

-list of light nutritious and wholesome
Food principally of a fluid and muf-
-cilaginous nature. Barley water
Loaf sugar and water. Decoction
of Elm and such like things are
proper in the commencement of the
disease. In the more advanced
stages of the disease the articles of
Food should consist of the more
nourishing Yucca as the arrow-
root, Tago, Tapioca and Manado are
all proper. guarding carefully against
excesses or indulgence in any indiges-
-table Food: on the contrary selecting
such as are light and digestible.

In some cases Dysentery as-
-sumes the Chronic form and the pa-
-tient is kept low by the irritation of
Tenesmus or by frequent returns of

Diarrhoea: Salivation may here be resorted to with marked advantage. The Calomel may be given in small doses together with frictions of Mercurial Ointment.

The Blisters on the abdomen should be kept running and a flannel roller applied round the belly of the patient. We may here give a grain or two of Ipecacuan. Combined with Opium with marked advantage; also the Decoction of Logwood, and to this we may add the Infusion of Colombo; and if the patient's strength permits, riding on horse back.

If the Food be carried off undigested, Constituting a Lientery, of the bowels, which is ow=

=ing to an enfeebled state of them;
the Astringent Substances, such as
the Log-wood, Catechu, and the Sew-
berry-root may be administered.

To prevent a relapse the
patient should be warmly clad;
with flannel next the skin: use
gentle exercise in the open air: observe
regular hours in eating and sleep:
=ing, and every other means of res=
toring the healthy functions of the body.

I must now close this brief
and imperfect essay, but previously
to concluding, I must express my
warmest thanks in return for
the instruction and knowledge
I have gained in attendance on your
highly instructing and interesting
Lectures: and that you may individ=

ually by your useful labours continue
to uphold the reputation of the first
Medical School in the New World,
and that your lives may be long
and prosperous, is the sincere
wish of one who is now constrained
to claim a share of that indul-
gence and liberality, by which you
have been heretofore Characterized.

